SIXTH SECTION
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Plans for Invasion of Mexico—Past Annexations of Mexican Territory by U. S.—Music—Drama—Poultry

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500,000 MEN FOR TWO YEARS, COSTING $1,000,000 A DAY, TO MAKE INTERVENTION IN MEXICO EFFECTIVE

That Is What One of the Highest Military Authorities in Government Service Says—Plans for Invasion Made by Both Army and Navy

WHILE most people in Washington, with the notable exception of President Wilson, have now accepted the idea that the United States must use force in Mexico in the not distant future, very few realize the exact nature of the task which it is feared this Government will have to take upon itself. It is popularly believed that army officers are eager for intervention, on the general principle that the army as a whole wants to justify its existence and exhibit its prowess. This is not true. Because they, better than others, realize just what intervention means, army officers are more against intervention than in favor of it. They know that intervention in Mexico of a military character is just about the biggest job which this country could find for itself were it to go out looking for trouble.

How great is the gap between the popular idea of intervention and the military man's view of it is shown by the statement of Senator Penrose the other day and the words of one of the highest military authorities in the United States service. The Pennsylvania Senator said that he wouldn't be afraid to start for Mexico City with 10,000 men behind him, and that he would feel confident of getting there with his force practically intact.

The military authority, on the other hand, has never altered the estimate he made for President Taft a year ago that it would require 500,000 men, at a cost of a million dollars a day for two years, to make military intervention in Mexico an effective reality.

There you are, with a choice between the estimate of a civilian political leader and that of a man whose whole life has been devoted, with marked success, to the study and solution of military problems. It is safe to say that the average man would prefer, on the whole, to incline toward the military man's estimate, staggering as it is, rather than that of the Senator, comforting as that is.

Both views are extremes, however, and the truth probably lies between them. A compromise between 10,000 and 500,000 as the number of men required does not greatly reduce the stupendous aspect of the task to a country which has all told an army of only 80,000 men, perhaps 100,000 militia, and absolutely no military reserve. With this mere handful of men now available, it will, in the last analysis, depend upon the men of the United States whether intervention in Mexico is to be really effective or not, for they make up the only resource from which to draw what the regular army establishment and its supplement, the militia, lack in numbers. Nearly 200,000 men, without accepting the extreme estimates, will have to come forward from their present positions in civil life and volunteer to take a hand in the gigantic task which, Washington now believes, is going to be forced upon the United States.

As has frequently been pointed out, the beginnings of intervention in Mexico could be accomplished in a very short time with the present forces of the regular army and the militia. An expeditionary force is already waiting the word at Texas City. The border cities could be seized literally in a day without serious consequences or any great effort. The ports of Mexico on both the Atlantic and the Pacific coast could be put under blockade within one hundred hours after the first order was issued. A force could be landed at Vera Cruz within a few days, the time between its embarkation and debarkation being occupied by the navy in reducing the fortifications of the city on the ocean side and occupying vital points.

Neither is there much doubt about the ability of a comparatively small force, say 15,000 or 20,000 men, to make its way from Vera Cruz to Mexico city in a brief period and follow its march with an effective assault upon the Mexican capital. Even these few operations would give to the United States the control of all means of ingress and egress on three sides of Mexico, thus depriving her of imports of arms, ammunition and other necessaries of war, and in addition control of the capital of the country and the national seat of government. And there, in the opinion of military men in Washington, just when that much had been accomplished would the real task of intervening in Mexico begin.

The disagreement between the army men on the one side and civilians on the other as to what intervention in Mexico would require is more apparent than real. The fundamental difference between their views lies in the fact that neither group means the same thing as the other group when it speaks of "intervention in Mexico."

The belief on the one hand is that when the border has been seized and Mexico city occupied, together with a blockading of Mexico's ports, the United States will have "intervened" in Mexico. The military view is that what President Wilson has done in the last five months in Mexico, without the use of a single soldier, is "intervention" just as much as what the spokesmen of the civilian group mean when they talk of intervention, and that real intervention means a great deal more than the operations outlined above.

The kind of intervention which the army has in mind is an occupation of the entire country of Mexico by the forces of the United States, its policing by American soldiers as thoroughly as the city of New York is guarded by day and by night, the elimination of the bandits, pillaging and barbarity which now rule two-thirds of the country and the substitution of law, order, and real government. And that, as the army man sees it, is a task even greater than the work Gen. Porfirio Diaz was twenty years in doing, that is, stamping out lawlessness and making Mexico a fit place for the investment of capital, the pursuit of agricultural and other industries and the transaction of commerce. And that is why the army man stationed at Washington, with some perspective of the situation, and some responsibility confronting him beyond that of a single regiment or company, talks of intervention in Mexico in terms of hundreds of thousands of men, years of time and millions of dollars.

Army officers would like these aspects of the Mexican problem to be understood by every one before intervention is embarked upon. It is to be borne in mind, however, that whether these things are understood generally or not, whether or not the army has the proper force, supplies and equipment it thinks necessary, it is ready to start for Mexico to-morrow. It only hopes that it will have the opportunity to do the job in the best way if it is to be called upon to do it at all.

The Mexican situation has been before the War Department for three years. During that time the War College, the General Staff and heads of great divisions and bureaus have had imposed upon them the task of making all sorts of preparations for eventualities in Mexico. These plans are prepared, and the army is as ready as it can be without actually taking the steps preliminary to a movement of troops and the enlistment of volunteers.

It is a singular fact that while Washington is convinced that intervention in Mexico is inevitable, both the War and Navy departments have been bound hand and foot, and are under orders from the White House to do absolutely nothing which would give rise to the belief that the United States Government contemplates the use of armed force in Mexico. While few believe that President Wilson can extricate this Government from the Mexican tangle without a resort to force, the President himself has given absolutely no hint that he regards such an outcome as even a remote possibility.

But having had the problem before them for three years, the military experts base their studies and their plans upon the assumption that intervention in Mexico will be for the purpose of accomplishing two things; first, to afford protection to American and other foreign interests in Mexico, and second, the restoration of law and order in that country. Since President Wilson has grappled with the problem a third objective has been added, that of the establishment of a "constitutional Government" resting solely upon the consent of the governed and unstained by blood or violence.

Therein lies the difference between the task of the United States in Mexico in 1913 and that which it had in the same country in 1846. In the war with Mexico it was simply a task of reducing to submission a central Government at Mexico city and forcing it to accept the loss of Texas, and then for the trouble it had made to give up the vast area then known as California. That was a war fought between armies each operating on military and tactical lines.

In the present situation the work of 1846-7 must be done all over again, and when it is done the real task, that of the policeman, can be begun. As pointed out by the military men, the whole trouble with Mexico is the degeneration of the supposed central authority, the Federal Government. It is the failure and inability of the Mexico city Government to control the territory over which it is supposed to rule that makes it seem necessary and probable that the United Stats will exert itself to save the situation.

The overthrow of the Mexico city Government can be easily accomplished, or at least without fear of any very great obstacles; but it will not in the least remedy the situation in the States where hundreds and even thousands of noncombatants, including many foreigners, have been despoiled of their property and killed. It is more likely, rather, that the subjugation of the central Government by American forces would for the moment serve to increase the lawlessness outside of Mexico city and the subsequent danger to the life and property of foreigners. Again, if the American forces went over the border and took Hermosillo in Sonora, the present capital of the Carranzistas, such action would not in the least better the situation in the score of other States where innumerable robber bands are making industry, business and even residence impossible for foreigners.

Having considered all these things the army is convinced that unless the United States is going to be satisfied merely with driving out of Mexico city a Government of which it does not approve, and then withdrawing, leaving the country open to even greater anarchy and demoralization, the task of intervention will have only begun when the Federal and rebel capitals are occupied.

So widely scattered are the great properties, industrial and agricultural and commercial, which go to make up the greater part of the material interests of the United States and other nations in Mexico, that there is no part of the country where it would not be necessary to have detachments of American troops for police purposes.

It is not difficult to see the necessity for thousands and thousands of soldiers to make an intervention of this kind effective. Yet it is only such an intervention that the military authorities have in mind in contemplating the present situation. It is this sort of intervention which Europe means when discussing the probability of action by the United States.

President Wilson doubtless has the authority to use the available forces under his command to compel President Huerta or his successor to get out of the National Palace in Mexico city. Real military intervention he cannot undertake without the support of Congress. He must go to the national legislature for authorization to make what will be virtually war for a time, for authority to enlist volunteers in the service of the United States and for money with which to pay for it all. Consequently there is no danger of the American people waking some morning and finding all the machinery set in action and intervention about to be accomplished. Congress must be heard from first.

With seven battleships on the east coast of Mexico, two cruisers and a third on the way thither and three cruisers and auxiliaries on the west coast or en route and more in reserve it will be simple for the navy to fulfil its part of the programme. Tampico Vera Cruz, Campeche, Progreso, Puerto, Mexico and perhaps one or two other ports will be seized and blockaded without difficulty on the Atlantic side, Guaymas, Mazatlan, Salina Cruz will be the principal ports to be held and guarded on the west coast.

On the border Matamoras, Neuvo Laredo, Piedras Negras, Juarez, Nogales, will be occupied, together with their railroad and telegraph communications. Forces will be advanced southward from the border and westward from Vera Cruz toward Mexico city and other centres of communication. State capitals will be seized as rapidly as the advancing forces can make their way.

This advance will be governed more by the state of railroad communications than by the opposition of Mexicans, as communications to the several bases in the rear must be kept open, no matter how slow this makes the forward movement. In the guerrilla warfare that is expected in the northern State more is feared from destruction of railroad communications in the rear than from any opposition in front.

For this reason along all lines of entry into Mexico, especially from Vera Cruz, thousands of men will be required for the task of guarding the railways from destruction. To-day less than 50 per cent. of the mileage of Mexican railroads is under operation, though parts of them have been practically reconstructed throughout three or four times because of the havoc played by the rebels in harassing the government forces.

Once the principal lines of railway communication as well as the ports and the capital have been seized, the American forces will begin the work of disseminating themselves to the more remote localities, for the double purpose of stamping out the raiding bands and affording protection to foreigners and their properties. It is not expected that this will be done in a day or a month, for there is no doubt that at the outset considerable bodies of Mexican troops will confront the American forces.

Huerta claims now to have an army of 80,000 men. It is believed here that he actually has not more than two-thirds of that number of soldiers, and that not more than a quarter of these could easily be assembled into an army at any one place.

In the war with Mexico the American forces habitually, in an unbroken series of victories, defeated forces three and four times of their own number. Army officers see no reason why these performances could not, at least in a measure, be repeated. Thus it is believed that the effective military force of the Mexican Government could be broken and dissipated in a comparatively brief period, with but few battles worthy of the name.

Carranza claims for the Constitutionalists 80,000 men under arms. When all Mexico has been under arms for nearly three years, army officers here, with definite reports to guide them, do not credit these revolutionists with more than half that number of soldiers. Their forces are even more widely scattered than those of the Federals, and are not organized. A junction of forces is not considered likely, on the principle that the Mexican hates his countryman more than he does the Yankee by reason of old jealousies and internecine struggles.

So, in the north, the purely military campaign is regarded much as the one expected in the south, on the road to Mexico city from Vera Cruz. Army officers see no reason why any serious losses should be expected in the expected conflicts with Mexican soldiers of both the present Federal and revolutionist forces. The demoralization and surrender of the Federals and the breaking up of the present revolutionists into small bands is the expected outcome of the first few engagements.

The talk of Mexicans to the effect that internal troubles will be forgotten if the United States invades their territory and that every Mexican will take a rifle and rush to the defence of his country is not taken very seriously in Washington. It is rather believed that a people which has not sufficient patriotism to suppress lawlessness, pillaging, burning and even the carrying off of all the women of whole villages will not be found electing to die in such a hopeless cause as that of opposing the United States.

The better class, it is believed, those with a stake in the country, are already secretly hoping the United States will come and make their country fit for going about its business again. As soon as they dare it is expected they will openly align themselves with the United States for the sake of preserving their material interests. The poorer classes likewise, it is believed, will eventually be found helping rather than hindering the pacification of the country by Americans should intervention be undertaken by this Government.

With a great number of the industries of Mexico suspended, agriculture diminished, prices high and the obtaining of food already a difficult matter for everybody it is not believed that the peons will be slow to enlist in the cause that promises them good pay and plenty to eat. The shrewder Mexicans will quickly see on which side their bread is buttered and act accordingly.

More is feared from the Indians in the way of continued opposition than from any other class because of the ease with which they can be persuaded by Mexicans that the United States comes to enslave them. For this reason it is expected that it will take longer to convince the Indian, where their interest really lies than the Mexicans proper.

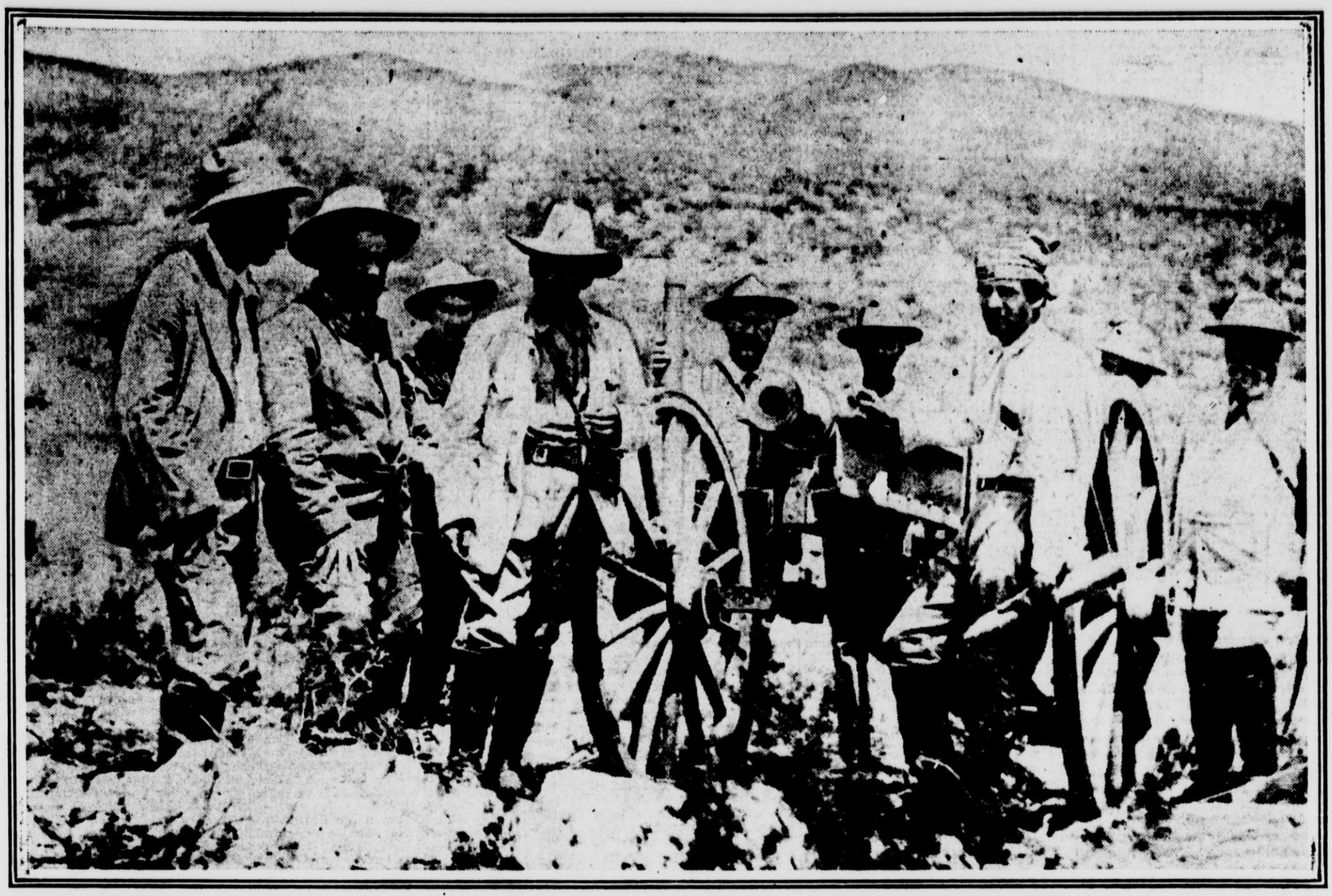
That Mexicans will be employed in running to earth the innumerable bands who for three years have lived on loot is considered as more than probable. In other words, it is the plan to make the Mexicans help to clean their own house.

Under efficient leadership, good pay, good food and decent treatment, American officers have found in the Latin-Americans, in Cuba and Porto Rico, the makings of excellent constabulary. The success of this plan would relieve the United States forces of a goodly part of the burden, and just so rapidly diminish the period through which it would be necessary to keep a very large force in Mexico.

As in Cuba, army officers who expect to have a part in the work if intervention comes believe that eventually the American forces can content themselves with garrisoning the larger cities, while the native constabulary, under American officers, complete the task of stamping out banditry and restoring the reign of law. There is no doubt the military government of this period would be the best Mexico ever had.

The task of intervention in Mexico would be much more gigantic and more to be dreaded were it not for the experience acquired by the United States army in Cuba, Porto Rico and the Philippines in the last fifteen years. Practically every army officer now has at least a fair knowledge of Spanish, and, what is more important, an understanding of the Latin-American character. For this reason, they feel that they understand the Mexican problem fully, knowing conditions in other Latin-American countries from first hand experience.

They feel likewise that they are reasonably certain of what the Mexicans will do under given circumstances, and by what mode of treatment they may most successfully be dealt with. For these reasons, the army officer to-day is not at all afraid that the army will not prove equal to the task which seems likely to be thrust upon it. All he asks is that the question of Mexican intervention be understood by the Government and the people before it is undertaken, so that the army may take up its work with an equipment of men and facilities proportionate to the size of the task in hand.



A Carranza field piece.

Brig.-Gen. Leonard Wood.

Venustiano Carranza.

MEXICO'S EX-PRESIDENTS FIND REFUGE HERE.

RECENT reports said that Gen. Porfirio Diaz, ex-President of Mexico, was to make his permanent home at Miami, Fla. If he should do so he would be following in the footsteps of predecessors, for two of the best known of Mexican ex-Presidents found resting places, temporary or permanent, in the United States.

One of them died in New York city. That was Sebastian Lerdo de Tejada, one of the most prominent figures in Mexican history in the period which included the rule of Mexico by Emperor Maximilian. Lerdo de Tajada, with Benito Juarez, fought hard against Maximilian, and the supporters of the French-Austrian regime blamed the two principally for the execution in 1867 of the Austrian Archduke who hoped and fought in vain to found a foreign dynasty south of the Rio Grande.

When Lerdo de Tejada clashed with Diaz he was compelled to seek refuge in the United States. He died in New York city in 1889.

Thirteen years before, on June 20, 1876, there died in the city of Mexico another Mexican President and dictator who fills a much bigger place in the history of Mexico. That was Gen. Santa Anna, who fought the Americans in the war of 1846-47. Before that time he had tried without success to prevent the Texans from setting up a Government of their own.

In his day Santa Anna was the biggest figure in the Mexican Government—he was the Mexican Government in fact—but his fellow Mexicans tired of him, as they did later of Porfirio Diaz, and they cast him out to seek refuge on the soil of the "gringos."

Santa Anna lived for some time on Staten Island, now a part of New York city. Later his fellow countrymen permitted him to return to his native country. He died there an old man, neglected and almost forgotten by the people whom he had ruled.